

Wiltshire Guild
Spinners Weavers and
Dyers



Newsletter December 2015

Letter from the Editors

The “What’s On?” looks fairly thin at this time of year but there are still events to look forward to in 2016. Meanwhile we have several workshop reports, useful links and good experiences to share in this newsletter. With Christmas and New Year about the happen we wish everyone a happy, creative and productive time and look forward to learning, making and doing lots more next year.

Julia and Harriette

February Guild Meeting

A very important aspect of Guild meetings is the opportunity it gives us to share with other enthusiasts the items we have made. This happens as a normal part of the Guild day, but for February we want to make **“Show and Tell”** a main component of our day.

We hope that members will bring in one or more particular “special” items they have made to display to all members. If you could also add some information about the techniques and materials used plus your name, Jackie will display these ready for a joint session at about 11.30am, when we would ask each of you to **“Show and Tell”**. Hopefully, there will be items of wear among the display and also other items made previously so we can have a full scale **“Fashion Show”**.



After lunch and the notices, the scene will be set for our models (yes, that’s you) to walk while I do the talk to the assembled members. Of course it is light hearted, but it does inspire others as well as allowing for some fun.

If time permits, Lesley is going to talk briefly about the National Association of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, and explain some of their activities; National Exhibition 2016, Summer School, Certificate of Achievement and the trial of modular courses.

Jackie

Remember, if reading online, press Ctrl and click on anything [underlined in blue](#) for more information on the World Wide Web.

Hello Everyone,

At last year's AGM I was voted onto the Committee for a second year and asked to take over from Valerie Laverick who had stepped down from the Committee as Programme Secretary after successfully doing the job for approximately four years. It's a huge responsibility and a hard act to follow as Val did it so well. I'm sure you'll all join me in expressing our thanks to her for all the hard work she did to give us such a varied and interesting programme during that time. I'd also like to thank Kathy for looking after this year's speakers and for organizing the fleece sale this year. Happily, she's agreed to repeat the fleece sale exercise next year, as I know very little about fleece.

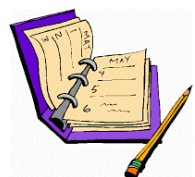
As a long-time member of the Guild, Jackie Pohnert agreed to help me and together we have produced the 2016 Programme, a copy of which you will have received on paying your annual subs in September. We have tried to follow in Val's footsteps by, we hope, finding something of interest for everyone. Our thanks go to all those people who have given suggestions for the programme which are kept on file for future use, if not included in next year's programme.

Please, do continue to offer suggestions for talks, demonstrations and workshops as it is very useful to have a ready-made database to tap into. You can leave a note on the clipboard in Studio 1, email us, or telephone. Some of you, I know, belong to other groups and/or Guilds and details of any good speakers are invaluable. Of course if you have any fleece supplying contacts we'll pass these on to Kathy.

If you could provide details of the type of talk/demonstration etc. they do, together with their contact details email/website, or telephone number that would be grand. Likewise, any speaker you think shouldn't be included for whatever reason is equally useful.

Finally, you probably noticed in the September Newsletter (page 4) we gave details of upcoming talks and workshops. This is something we plan to do every quarter in future.

Lyn Pybus and Jackie Pohnert



National Exhibition 2016 at Killerton House, Devon.

There are two sections to the exhibition: a selected section and an open section. All items need to have elements that have been spun, woven and/or dyed.

The **Open Section** will be "Bookmarks" 20cms maximum length and 5cms maximum width. (You can start planning your bookmark now ...!).

Selected Items: Selection will be based on photographs and samples. Here are some tips for selection given by judges of previous exhibitions in the Journal:

Good photographs are essential for the judges to see the quality of the entry. Samples of yarn and cloth make all the difference to the judging process. If the entry is to be a finished garment or item of yarn, the photograph needs to be of the finished item for judges to make a decision. Samples of the yarns sent with the form should be exactly the same as the ones used in the submitted work. Any item that has a selvedge that can be seen such as a rug, tapestry or scarf should have a photograph that shows all the edges. The photographs should not be cropped.

A decent sample of handspun hanks should be sent so that details such as regular twist in singles and in plied yarns can be demonstrated; that is of course if the particular yarn requires it. Enough of fancy yarns should be in the sample to reveal its own special qualities.

For full details see this [link](#)

FOR SALE!

Loom For Sale

Four shaft six peddle Jack loom. 36 inch width.
£150.00. Already dismantled, buyer will need to collect from Bodmin Moor.

Please contact Sheila Campbell

Tel 01579 345825

Guild Events; January 2016 – March 2016

Jackie and I hope you have a very merry Christmas and wish you all the best for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

We are starting off the 2016 programme of activities on:

16 January

10.30 a.m. - Working on your own projects, followed by a **soup fundraiser** at lunchtime. The lunch will cost £2.50

2.00 p.m. Anne Poole will be getting you all involved in a light hearted and fun filled journey into **‘Colour and Design for the Terrified.’**

So many crafts people say, ‘I can read a pattern, or set of instructions, but I’m not “Arty”.’ Now is the time to put your fears and phobias behind you as you start to learn that, ‘Yes you are!’ Anne is very enthusiastic and passionate about getting everyone creative.

20 February

10.30a.m. Jackie is organising a **‘Show and Tell’** with displayed items

12.00 noon ‘Fashion Show’

2.00 p.m. Lesley Greaves - a **‘History of the National Association of Weavers Spinners and Dyers – The Way Forward’**

19 March

10.30 a.m. **‘Butterfly Loom Workshop’** with Mandy Whitfield (max 20 people @ £10 per person including the use of a loom. Wool will be available at the Guild, but please feel free to take your own wool if you prefer). To book contact Lyn Pybus.

2.00 p.m. Talk/demonstration by Mandy Whitfield on Butterfly Looms – looms will be available to purchase, costs vary from: £10.99 - £21.00

The Butterfly Loom is a new hand loom which uses a series of wrapping and knotting techniques making it ideal for all ages and a great alternative and addition to traditional methods.

Lyn and Jackie

Karen Skeates, felt artist

Karen gave us an inspiring demonstration of her wonderful art of picture felting. (The robin on the front cover is an example of her work) At school she did art A Level and particularly enjoyed fine drawing but at the time this wasn't particularly the fashion and the examiners gave her a low mark. Her teachers were outraged and had her papers remarked. Grayson Perry apparently had a similar experience and described it as "falling foul of American post-expressionism. She later (life after baby) learned felting from Shiela Smith (author of several books about felting, including *Felt Fabric Designs: A Recipe Book for Textile Artists*) "my first experience of felt making with Sheila Smith did make me excited about the possibilities of felt as a medium and feel that I had 'discovered my medium'. She was impressed and intrigued by the felt pictures of [Andrea Hunter](#) who is inspired by the Yorkshire landscape. Karen kindly said that she had visited the Guild earlier this year and "felt she'd come home".

Karen then shared some of her techniques with us: she uses commercial needle punch prefelt and creates her pictures from various natural fibres, including a lovely black Shetland fleece from Trish Gray's black ewe called Olivia! This is used for the eyes of her creations along with merino burrs (neps) from World of Wool or Norwegian lambswool mixed burrs. Karen explained that her inspiration comes partly from her work with the [Wiltshire Wildlife Trust](#) and she teaches and runs workshops for school groups as well.

Her materials are very simple: a towel, some bubble wrap, the felt, clear plastic, olive oil soap and water. Karen raved about Herdwick with its wiry multishaded fibres and showed how she had used just a tiny clump to make her delicate wren picture (see front page of newsletter). The coarse kemp is placed, sometimes with tweezers, then fixed with a tiny bit of fine merino to hold the kemp line in place. She places her images on shapes made from prefelt, then covers with fine plastic (from a clear bin liner), and gently "tickles" the moist, soapy wool. Then she adds another layer of bubble wrap and uses a piece of pipe insulation to gently roll the piece about 50 times in four different directions, checking how the felting is going before turning the piece over or doing any more. It might need another 200 rolls but she explained that she rarely does more than 500 rolls in all.

The piece is very gently rinsed, with maybe a little vinegar added to the second last rinse (to avoid making the piece too acid for the subsequent mount). Then she gently irons the picture once it has been dried flat, on a wool setting. Her recommended framers are [Right Angle Framers](#) in Corsham, but you could always make your own.

We are delighted that Karen has joined our Guild and look forward to seeing her future projects. She has also kindly provided a list of some of her suppliers below and I, for one, am looking forward to more creative felting in future.

Harriette

Suppliers recommended by Karen;

[Piiku](#) genuine finnsheep wool, needle punch, carded fleece, roving and yarn. Their collection of specially dyed colour-themed batts is a revelation. Soft, felts beautifully and in colours that chime with nature.

[Twist Fibre Craft Studio](#). Good for needle felting supplies.

[Rainbow Silks](#). This is the supplier for the round handled felting needle holder that several people asked about. The handle can be viewed by navigating to the 'EFCO and other needle felting supplies' page of the website. Catalogue number is EF2123701 and current price is just 85p each.

[Norwegian Wool](#) do what they say on the tin! I expect your members already know that they are great suppliers of C1 and pels wools. I use the C1 for needle felting both 2D and 3D work. It's a little springy and crimpy for 2D work so I use it sparingly but is excellent for 3D work. Their fine weight needle punch (prefelt) also makes a good background for pictures.

[World of Wool](#). Brilliant for everything!

Scrapstore: find your [local one](#) and see what they have. Fibreboard sometimes available to use as base for felting. Range of materials you might be able to use in your crafting.

3 D Knitting Workshop with Alison Ellen

The name alone was enough to draw me in to sign up for this workshop hosted at the guild by the knitting group. '3-D knitting? I wondered; firstly, what's that? And secondly, can this further the aim of the textile 'revolution?!' I went along to find out.



The 3-D knitting workshop was led by [Alison Ellen](#) who is a textiles teacher from Farnham. Alison trained in textile design at Farnham Art College and first worked in hand printed textiles. She then went on to design and make hand knitwear and is now a busy teacher and author of 4 books on the subject. Her approach to knitting considers knitting as a means of creating a textile fabric and 3-dimensional shape rather than simply making a flat pattern. As well as using colour, texture and pattern, Alison creates shaping through the structure of the knitting itself. Items are knitted all as one piece with emphasis on construction exploring what the technique can do to alter the drape,

thickness and stretch of the material.

The tone for the day was quickly set by Alison who suggested we might move away from the restrictions of pattern knitting to being more creative. Our first task was to use the temporary cast on method and knit a circle using short rows. Such a simple technique that many knitters might use, perhaps with hats or socks, quickly opened up a realm of possibilities. The short rows, kept in the same direction, meant of course you would meet up to make a circle but short rows knitted in the opposite direction meant you could turn away from the circle and move forward in any direction you wanted!





Also, the temporary nature of the cast on method meant that stitches could be grafted back to the start of the circle or used to begin a completely different idea. Along with adding different edge finishes, putting in a crocheted stitch or two or using double pointed needles you could go on to embellish, add tubes or i-cord shapes creating all sorts of weird and

wonderful effects!

Our next task was to investigate the range of beautiful samples that Alison brought in to show us and find out how her techniques translate into fabric. Along with short row techniques, one end and both end shaping are used and are done here resulting in these fabulous pods.



I was particularly fascinated by the garments that use stitches to influence and shape the fabric by pulling in or pulling up, thereby making it stretchy or firm, thick or thin. Here ribbing is used to pull in the fabric in a place that requires shaping using the stitch structure to reduce the apparent surface area. In my usual knitting I would rely on good old increase and decrease stitches to achieve this but this multi-dimensional approach gives not only the shape but the most wonderful fit.



Several of the group tried on Alison's cardigans and they looked as though they were tailor made. The comfort factor was sublime - you literally felt as though you were being hugged by textiles, even on the garments with a more square shape or flowing drape – heaven!

To achieve further shaping of the fabric and enhance the 3-D effect, Alison might use a combination of reverse stockinette stitch with either garter stitch or regular stocking stitch knitted on mitred squares. Or if you add regular ribbing to a mitred square it again gives a different effect from the regular garter stitch mitred square literally changing the shape of the square making it more pointed and adding a flow in direction that makes the fabric almost dance. Adding in a second colour to ribbing on a garment constructed using mitred squares and the fabric literally starts to take on a life of its own!



On the jacket that Alison is wearing in this picture you can see she has picked up and knitted short row triangular inserts into her mitred squared two tone shapes and this has added flare and structure along with being visually stunning. In her most recent book, Alison uses the comparison of a regular stocking stitch swatch beside sample squares constructed using the above methods and you can see how the simple use of purl and plain can be used to achieve the 3-D effect.

Along with various stitch combinations, Alison uses wool, silk, cotton, hemp and linen, and space- and tie-dyeing to obtain a range of subtle patterns and colours. She uses British wool spun for her with Blue Faced Leicester fibre by [Diamond Fibres](#), resulting in a yarn that Alison says is lustrous, resilient and strong and takes the colour beautifully.

Her ideas for textures and colours are sourced from the surrounding countryside, gardens, drawing landscape and visiting museums. Designs for shapes are influenced sometimes by studies of ethnic costume and clothing, but also from discussions with people trying on the garments, and seeing how designs work on different people. It is easy to see the parallels in sources for ideas between Alison and our own projects.

If you are considering having a go yourself you will be delighted to hear, that alongside the basic stitches of purl and plain, the many different stitches knitters use such as cables, double knitting, i-cord, Swedish knitting, tubular, modular and of course short rows and rib are considered as 3 -D methods. As an idea for weavers, Alison also showed a sample of a woven scarf which was constructed using contrasting coloured single yarns which had been spun either S or Z. Woven together so that when taken off the loom would concertina and fold somewhat, giving shimmers of colour which were revealed when moved or wrapped in this instance. Stunning!

At many points in the workshop a silent hush fell over the room as concentration and thought made way for construction and design ideas. Occasionally a more chatty moment led to an interesting deviation in the stitches but the beauty of this method meant it just gave rise to a creative diversion and an excuse to knit off in another direction (with just the odd rip back or two)! The workshop gave an added dimension (no pun intended!) and contributed to a greater understanding of knitting. Usually I am completely happy to use a pattern to knit but being liberated in this way was a revelation, giving permission to do whatever you want. How often do we get permission to do that?!

Thank you so much to Alison for her workshop, also to Margaret for organising it and bringing along delicious cake.

Kathy Davis



The end results of our 3 D samples



**Glenis Price's
Natural Dye Crocheted flowers**

AGWSD Summer School 2015

The AGWSD Summer School is run every two years, alternating biennially with the AGWSD National Exhibition. The venue for the Summer School moves around the country, which means Summer School, should eventually arrive in a town or village somewhere near you! This makes the invitation irresistible to refuse! This year the AGWSD Summer School was at Moreton Morell College, near Stratford-Upon-Avon, some two hours from where I live. There might be a question over cost but if you consider accommodation, food,

entertainment and the courses are all included, it really is good value. You pay in two instalments, making it easier to spread the cost.

So when the brochure for summer school landed through my letter box, it was like looking at a menu with all my favourite dishes on! How to choose, how to choose....?! The choice was made slightly easier by the fact that classes are limited in size, so you select your preferred course and are later told if you have been allocated a place. Amongst the choices this year were; 'A fleece a Day,' 'Creative Felt Making,' 'Experiments with Knitting,' 'Weft Ikat Weaving,' 'Cocoons to Cloth' and many more. [Click here](#) for the full list. Administrator, Chris, was incredibly helpful and accommodating (how she sorted choices from 250 participants is beyond me)! I was lucky enough to get a place on the 'Dyer's Recipe Book' course with [Debbie Tomkies](#).

Courses are either long (5 days) or short (2.5 days) and you arrive and leave the weekend either side of the week or mid-week if on a short course. The mid-week point is marked on Wednesday afternoon by providing a trip out (for existing and arriving students) to a local attraction that would be of interest. This year the choices were the [Arts and Craft House at Compton Verney](#), a visit to the [RSC Costume Collection](#) or [The Weavers House](#) in Coventry. So besides wonderful courses a full programme of entertainment is there to tempt you along!

For my short course I chose the 'Dyer's Recipe Book' course because despite my love of natural colours, I was beginning to wonder what my hand spun knitting would look like in an array of colours other than the cream/beige to brown/black spectrum!

The aim of the dyer's course was to make a 'recipe book' of colours for reference. Debbie wasted no time at all in getting us started. From the 12 colours, in Debbie's Procion dye range, we made over 80 different tints and shades. We could have further made any number of shades in between and were only limited by need for sleep! The 11 of us on the course worked together to spread the workload - we each dyed a proportion of the total number to share out. This task ran throughout but we were quickly able to create our own colourway, dyeing either yarn or fibre, silk or cotton, all of which Debbie had available or you could take your own items. Colours were achieved with pale, medium and deep versions of the individual colours, then by mixing primary colours to achieve secondary colours and secondary colours to achieve tertiary colours. All shades in between these were made by adding different amounts of black thereby varying the colours once more. Got that?!

You can imagine recording all of this was quite interesting! The friendly nature of our group made it such fun, so the task was in fact very enjoyable and with an endless stream of tea, we got the job done!

Prior to the course we had been asked to bring sources of inspiration to help us choose colours to dye with. My three skeins were based on my favourite colours and a choice for a friend who I plan to knit for. Having had little success with my previous attempts at dyeing, I was intrigued to see if I could achieve a variegated yarn in the style of the high end Artesano yarn. My other two skeins were more explorative but all 3 of them enabled me to learn so much about the dyeing process. Glad to have been able to recall some basic science from way back when... I learned that different colour molecules bond to the fibre at different rates and again differently to the various fibre types, therefore affecting the final result.



I also learned how to minimise the chances of everything turning brown (which is not to say it's foolproof)! The most useful thing I learned was how to achieve the range of colours from a relatively small number of dyes. We had twelve but I was even more delighted to hear from Katie (of [Hilltop Cloud](#) fame), who only uses 5!

Even though I was only there for 2.5 days, it felt longer because of the full and packed programme. There literally was something for everyone. Alongside the amazing range of workshops, there was an auction (yes, lots of reasonably priced textile items and books – heaven!), a fashion show showcasing inspirational pieces, excellent talks, exhibitions and visits. Evenings could be spent in the ‘make and play’ area, where you could spend time with others either in craft or having a friendly game of something. All this on top of a wonderful friendly, inclusive atmosphere and a chance to meet others from all over who never tire of talking textiles! What more could you want?



This student used natural dyes



My hand painted merino laceweight.

Besides the brilliant time I had learning to dye, there is something else I will take away with me from my time at summer school: that is the incredible commitment of the AGWSD. Until now, they had been something a bit nebulous to me. Now I can see the amazing amount of work they put in to ensure that the crafts of weaving, spinning and dyeing (and related textile work) are retained, enhanced and passed on. The loss of such skills and knowledge, deeply rooted in our culture for generations, would be a crying shame; like stemming the flow of a whole stream of craftsmanship or watching it seep away. All this done on a voluntary basis for our benefit. Inspiring!

For more information or images from this year’s summer school click to see the [blog](#) and explore the links in red.

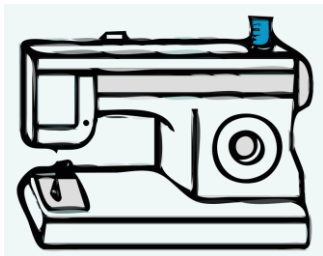
Kathy Davis

Weft 2015

On Saturday 24th October Trowbridge Museum was buzzing with activity. The “Big Weave Day” attracted over 200 visitors and seven of our Guild members were kept very busy giving demonstrations to really eager visitors. Between us we were able to demonstrate the museum’s ancient floor loom (capable of doing simple tabby weave with one foot pedal), a small, modern four-shaft floor loom, knotting fleece into the weaving on a rigid heddle loom, a four-shaft table loom set up for twill weaves, and kumihimo braiding. Other volunteers were demonstrating cane weaving for chair seats, basket weaving, card and pin-loom weaving, stick weaving, what seemed to be a table version of a back-strap loom, peg-loom and inkle loom weaving, and the very ancient vertical loom. This looked like a couple of tree branches with the warp threads weighted with stones. The museum was very welcoming to all its visitors and volunteers and I was impressed by the fantastic array of hands-on weaving available to both young and not so young. A great deal of interest was shown for our Guild and many of our leaflets were handed out. It was a very rewarding and worthwhile day and I would like to thank Lesley, Jenny, Val, Val, Pam and Julie for their excellent help and Hanne Dahl from Trowbridge Museum for organizing the day and inviting us to take part.

Dawn Thompson

Sewing Group



Beryl and Colleen have produced a programme for 2015/16 which you can find on the Guild website. There is a meeting once a month and most months cover a specific topic as well as time for your own project. If you just want to come along (bringing your own sewing machine and material) for one subject that's fine.

It's just the £2 door money for Guild members.

Flower Bowl Workshops Beryl, Colleen, Terri and I went to a Patchwork open day at Bromham. [Claire Passmore](#) spoke about her wonderful Wiltshire White Horse Pictures.



She also had her lovely Flower Bowls on display, which we all fell in love with. We arranged a date with her there and then to have her come and give us one of her workshops.

So, fourteen of us arrived loaded up with sewing machines and all sorts of fabric to start a wonderful full day of sewing. We all mostly finished one bowl to take home, with some homework to finish off the rest of them. They are matching nesting bowls that sit inside of each other.

We could choose from Sunflower, Waterlily, Poinsettia and Poppy. Even when we chose the same flower, they all looked very different as we all had such varied fabric.

We all had a great day with Claire and she said she wanted to join the Guild next year. I can see us having some more workshops with her in the future.



Valerie Laverick



Sandie Roche's Tapestry Course

Ten Guild members enjoyed two Saturdays in October learning the basic skills for tapestry weaving with Sandie Roche most ably assisted by two of her former pupils. We learnt how to warp up a simple loom, how to calculate warps per inch, the different techniques for shading, making patterns, shapes and textures. Here are our work-in-progress samplers. Hopefully their owners will bring the finished items to the Show and Tell in February. We all went away full of inspiration as Sandie is so enthusiastic about her craft and shared examples of her smaller pieces that she brought and photos of her larger tapestries.

Julia



Countryside Classroom – a really useful resource

Harriette spotted a link to Countryside Classroom in the Nation Guild newsletter that Colleen distributed to Guild Members by email.

Countryside Classroom is the largest ever partnership of its kind, and is led by Farming and Countryside Education (FACE) in collaboration with several other organisations including [The Prince's Countryside Fund](#), the Agricultural and Development Board (AHDB) and [The Ernest Cook Trust](#) .

They have a huge selection of resources on all manner of subjects aimed to help teachers deliver lessons to encourage children to develop an understanding of rural life and issues of sustainability.

There are some particularly useful booklets that have been developed with the Heritage Crafts Association that can be downloaded [here](#). Subjects covered are; weaving, willow weaving and tapestry weaving as well as button making and leatherwork. Some simple projects are suggested and links to further information and suppliers as included.

One particular link I found in the willow weaving booklet was to the work of [Sarah Poole](#) who lives and teaches in the Peak District; she has taught before at [Musgrove Willows](#) near Bridgwater who do regular courses in willow work. The prices for courses quoted for 2015 are; half day (£35), full day (£75) and 2 day courses (£130) with home cooked lunch included. Form an orderly queue please!

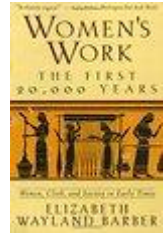
There is a huge amount of information on the website. Try reading [The Twelve Days of Christmas – in the natural environment](#) over the holidays. You could even be encouraged to make outdoor musical instruments with any children that you are responsible for, who are bored with the television or technology. As far as I can see, batteries are not required, which is a major advantage at Christmas!

Thank you, Harriette, for spotting the link- I have to admit I missed it, so I suspect one or two other people did too!

Julia

A book available in our library!

Women's Work – the first 20,000 years – Women, Cloth and Society in early Times by Elizabeth Wayland Barber (1996)



Review from Amazon.

New discoveries about the textile arts reveal women's unexpectedly influential role in ancient societies. Twenty thousand years ago, women were making and wearing the first clothing created from spun fibres. In fact, right up to the Industrial Revolution the fiber arts were an enormous economic force, belonging primarily to women. Despite the great toil required in making cloth and clothing, most books on ancient history and economics have no information on them. Much of this gap results from the extreme perishability of what women produced, but it seems clear that until now descriptions of prehistoric and early historic cultures have omitted virtually half the picture. Elizabeth Wayland Barber has drawn from data gathered by the most sophisticated new archaeological methods-methods she herself helped to fashion. In a "brilliantly original book" (Katha Pollitt, Washington Post Book World), she argues that women were a powerful economic force in the ancient world, with their own industry: fabric.

I found this book fascinating and have borrowed it again, just to reread it. It should be back in the library from December, so do try it too.

Harriette

Yarn server/ Yarn Pal.

At the Alison Ellen knitting workshop Rosemary had a wonderful tool for putting a ball or cone of wool on and which rotated on a little ball bearing turntable. She said it was invaluable for both knitting and warping up a loom. They are available from [The Knitting Gift Shop](#). The individual yarn server is £30, but with a swift attachment is £85. A similar product is available from [Brownberry Yarns](#) £24.95 - they call it a Yarn Pal. Both products are hand made in the UK.

A last minute Christmas present perhaps?

Harriette

[1940s Knitting Patterns from the Victoria and Albert Museum](#) (free)

Click on the heading to see the available patterns,



The 1940s in Britain was a high point for hand knitting. Women on the home front could make a contribution to the war effort by knitting for the troops using patterns that were often given away free. Many specialised patterns developed such as the * balaclava helmet with ear flaps for use in telephone operations or the mittens with a separate forefinger for firing a trigger in the cold.

You may not feel inclined to try the garments which are not

really to the modern taste, but this tea cosy entitled “[A Happy Thought](#)” could be quite fun to make and is available to download as a pdf or in Word.

Harriette



*In [Richard Rutt's book](#) *A History of Hand Knitting* he notes that the style for the balaclava helmet originated from the Crimean War (1854) when women sent the garments to the men to protect them from the bitter cold. The name, however, did not come into use until 1881.

Richard Rutt was the Bishop of Leicester in the 1980's. Does anyone else remember sending off to The Sunday Times for two knitting patterns? (One was an Aran style jumper with a wheatsheaf design on, and the other a cardigan with ecclesiastical motifs designed by Richard Rutt). I sent off for them and it is no surprise that I still have them!

Julia

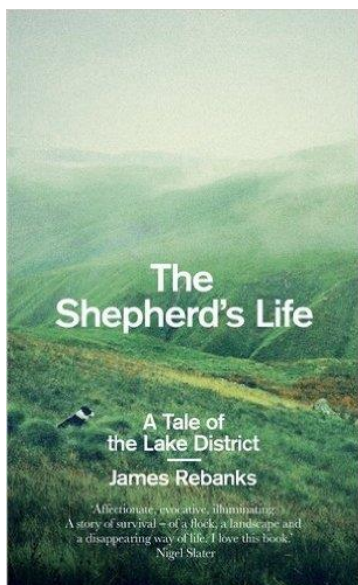
A very warm welcome to our new members:

Eileen Broadley, Ann Blackman, Val Burnett, Hilary Fassnidge, Charlotte Hansen, Jill Hillman, Sue McDonald, Jeanne Rayment, Margaret Richter, Anne Saywell, Lindsay Scrivener, Karen Skeates. We hope you enjoy learning and sharing new skills. The Guild has nearly 100 members now.

Book Review

The Shepherd's Life

By James Rebanks



James Rebanks is the Herdwick Shepherd, whose account of shepherding has a strong following on Twitter ([@herdyshepherd1](#)). His book, *The Shepherd's Life*, is a story of the Lake District and its people, education, modern and rural life. He and his family have lived and worked in and around the Lake District for generations. Their way of life is ordered by the seasons and has been for hundreds of years. A Viking would understand the work they do: sending the sheep to the fells in the summer and making the hay; the autumn fairs where the flocks are replenished; the toil of winter when the sheep must be kept alive and the light-headedness that comes with spring, as the lambs are born and the sheep get ready to

return to the fells. Interwoven with this seasonal tale, James Rebanks tells of his own life, struggles and success with education, male bonding, family love and hard work. An interesting and evocative book. Thank you, Rosemary, for lending it to me. Also available on Kindle and as an audio book.

Harriette

Breaking News:

Although Texere Yarns have recently gone into receivership Guy and Jo Texere recommend that customers go to Airedale Yarns who have agreed to supply the range of yarns that Texere used to and more.

Novo 45 Ltd Trading as [Airedale Yarns](#)

Suite 11, Kirkgate House

30 Kirkgate, Shipley, BD18 3QN from mid December 2015

As yet (Mid November) the website is not ready but try the link in December



Mystery Wheel



I am truly not looking for another wheel, but for some reason I found myself searching E-bay recently and saw this rather quirky one. I contacted the seller and he did not have much information about it as there was no maker's mark. He was worried about sending it by courier as it may not have survived the journey, so a lucky new owner collected it from Hove for the bargain price of £48. I wonder if any

Guild Members have seen anything similar. It is made of plywood and looks as though it was made with lots of love and care.

Julia

What's On

[Fabric of India V&A](#), London: The museum has one of the largest collections of Indian artefacts outside of India and highlights of the Fabric exhibition are the displays of sumptuous textiles from 17th-18th century silks and cottons to contemporary fashions. Allow at least 1 ½ hours to do the exhibition justice, very inspiring (Harriette and Rosemary) until 10 January 2016.

[John Darbon's](#) mill in Devon – open day: The Mill is holding an open weekend on May 14 and 15, 2016 at Hacche Lane Business Park, Pathfields Industrial Estate, South Molton, EX36 3LH. Read [here](#) the story of how this former punk rocker has found his niche in a woollen mill in Devon.

[Bristol Wool Fair](#) will be back at Washingpool Farm on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th September 2016.

[Trowbridge Museum](#) exhibition of vintage Teddy Bears (including knits and woven costume) Dec 28-end Jan 2106. – Thanks to Jill Hillman for mentioning this.

Please let us know of any other events that you think members would like to earmark in their diaries for 2016.

Recipe

African Chicken (quick and tasty)

Serves 4

You need:

500 g chicken breast, cut into small pieces

1 red chilli, deseeded and sliced

2 cloves garlic

1,5 tablespoon juice of lemon

1 teaspoon cinnamon

3 tablespoons olive oil

5 tablespoons pine nuts

5 tablespoons raisins

1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint leaves

salt, pepper



Put the chicken with the chilli, garlic, lemon, cinnamon and 1 tablespoon olive oil into a dish. Let it rest for at least 5 minutes.

Bake this in the rest of the olive oil for 5 minutes in a hot oven or in a covered pan on the stove.

Add the pine nuts and the raisins and bake another 5 minutes. Add salt and pepper.

Add the mint and serve with rice or couscous

Food for thought

To take photographs is to hold one's breath when all faculties converge in the face of fleeing reality.

It is at that moment that mastering an image becomes a great physical and intellectual joy."

[Henri Cartier-Bresson](#) 1908 -2004

A much respected French photographer - His father was a wealthy textile manufacturer, whose Cartier-Bresson thread was a staple of French sewing kits.

Thanks to Lyn Pybus for the quote.



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Front cover – one of Karen Skeates’ delightful bird pictures – see page six for a report of her talk.